

of incubation the male is continually found sitting on a low branch in the vicinity of the nest, but does not appear to take any part in the process of incubation. The Quail cannot be kept in cages for any time, as from its impatient habit of running to and fro before the bars or wires, it soon becomes totally blind. I have, however, kept them for several years in a room or large aviary closed for about three feet at the bottom, where they have laid, but never hatched.

In 1826, or about that time, the late Mr. Laing turned out at Keith Hall, in the St. Catharine Hills, several of the French or Red Legged Partridges; none, however, have been since met with.

#### APPENDIX.

249. *FALCO ANATUM*.—Several individuals of a Falcon have appeared about Salt Ponds this winter, 1862—1863, and also in the parish of St. Elizabeth, I have in my possession a living specimen taken at Goshen, near Port Henderson, in this parish, (not St. Ann's). It swooped on a large Cochinchina hen in a cottage yard on that property, and got entangled with the hen, which was too heavy for the hawk to lift, and in the struggle it was captured by the owner of the fowl. It appears to be a male; the dimensions are, length  $16\frac{1}{2}$  inches, expanse 40, flexure  $13\frac{1}{2}$ ; iris dark-hazel with black pupil, core yellow. The bill is small and weak, and leaden-blue, with a broad stripe of yellow covering the nostrils, frontal band narrow, white; head sepia brown spotted with black; a patch of black on the cheek extending over the eye, the rest of the cheek and throat white with a few black dots; breast white, clouded with reddish blotches; upper plumage reddish and slaty brown, each feather with greyish or rusty white edges; the entire under plumage white, with transverse and diagonal bands of slaty-black; legs and feet slender and yellow, claws black. Inner webs of wing quills barred with white; tail feathers barred with ash and tipped with white; third wing quill longest.\*

#### Notes on the MIMIDÆ of Jamaica.

BY RICHARD HILL.

(Communicated by the Smithsonian Institution.)

*MIMUS ORPHEUS*.—Linnæus, when he described in the list of his Thrushes the *Turdus polyglottus*, and the *Turdus orpheus*, and referred to Sloane's Jamaica for one, under the name of the Mocking Bird, and to Brown's Jamaica for the other, with no distinctive name, was noting the two remarkable *Mimidæ* of our late naturalists,—birds very different in song and very different in plumage, and yet commonly spoken of as very indistinctly distinguishable by those who, satisfied by "the bird in the bush," have never troubled themselves to examine "the bird in the hand,"—Linnæus, with his peculiar descriptive brevity, marks their character.

*Turdus polyglottus*. 7. T. obscure cinereus, subtus pallide cinereus, macula alarum albidæ. Eximia voce cantillat et cantu instruitur.

*Turdus orpheus*. 8. T. dorso fusco, pectore rectricibusque lateralibus albidis, alis fascia alba. Cauda longa rotundata. Rectrices extimæ albæ. E terra elevatus cantilena spectatorem rapit in sui admirationem.

I feel quite satisfied, therefore, that the common mocking bird of Jamaica should be called *Mimus polyglottus*, and not *orpheus*, as given by Selater and others, and that the name of *M. orpheus* belongs to the larger darker species

\* This specimen has lately been sent by Mr. March to the Smithsonian Institution. Though of smaller size than usual in the United States, it appears to be the same with our Duck Hawk, *F. anatum*, although the dark-cheek stripe is rather more distinctly defined than usual. (S. F. Baird).

referred to by Gosse as *Turdus mustelinus*, and which Mr. March, in his notes, has been so kind as to call *Mimus Hillii*.\*

It was not until I came to the south side of Jamaica, after years of experience in the north, that I heard the *orpheus* sing, and saw the bird. It was said to be known only in a peculiar line of hills bordering the sea, and extending from the Milk river in Vere to the Healthshire hills at Port Henderson, opposite Port Royal. It is commonly enough known in this line of country, but its clear-toned *cantalena*, as Linnæus expresses it, may be heard from the topmost bough of copses and thickets away from the sea side, but not far into the plains. The bird will then be seen perched on the highest stem, pouring out in vehement extacy its oft repeated brilliant notes, not unlike those of the Song-thrush of Europe, (*T. musicus*), or perhaps more like those of the Storm-thrush, (*T. viscivorus*), for the song has much repetition and little variety, and sounds like the words *viechoo, viechoo, a vicho a-vicho vicho*, with some graduated tones of the same few notes, piped out clear, and for a long continuance. The rhapsody is sure to arrest attention, for it will not be two or three singing together usually, but one bird alone, and all the other songsters will be silent and turned to admiring listeners.

We understand things best by comparison. The Storm-thrush, known also as the Missel-thrush and the Holm-thrush in England, is the bird our *orpheus* most resembles in habit as in song. The fondness of the Missel-thrush for the outskirts of woods, and the habit of never entering pastures or open lands, unless they be dotted with copses, or wooded clumps, where it will be heard singing its high-toned song on the upper twig of the inmost tree is exactly the habit of our *orpheus*. In these more open places, after singing vehemently for a time unanswered by any other straggler of the species, it will be observed to fly away to some more distant clump to repeat there the same song in the same solitary mood. It seems to me never tempted from the sea-bord hills, where it alone nestles. Its favorite attractions are the karata-aloes. When these have blossomed and the honey is pouring from the seed vessels in perfect streams, some three or four birds will be seen on the same stem of clustered flowers, drinking at the running cups and singing every now and then. They bring to my mind Teniers' pictures of merry-topers at a road-side tavern. We never see the birds searching the thickets; they seem to have gone where they may feed and sing, and sing and feed, without moving. We may set this down as certain that, in the strolls these birds make away from their customary sea-side hills and savannas, they never go beyond the influence of the sea breeze. They limit themselves to its well-known marine freshness. At the time when the opuntias or torch-thistle cactuses are in fruit, among the arid scrubs at the sea side, the *orpheus* is common enough and plentiful, and the morning and evening song will remind one, in its full mellow tone, of the Black-bird in an English summer.

The nest of the *orpheus* exactly resembles that of the *polyglottus*,—an outer frame work of sticks, spotted with moss and lichens, with an inner cup, very nicely rounded, composed of dry grass. It lays some four eggs of a *greenish drab*, speckled and spotted with umber. I never have seen the nestlings, nor have I even seen the bird caged.

If by *fascia alba* Linnæus means a white bar on the wing, the description would be inaccurate. The lesser wing coverts and the quills are edged with white. If by *fascia* he means a fillet or bordering, he is right. The plumage is a light umber, an ashy umber, slightly graduating into drab at the rump, with the shafts of the feathers of a ruddy hue, and the webs somewhat blue-brown. The two outer tail feathers have white inner webs as well as white outer, with a centre of black. The termination is white. The throat and breast are dashed with brown markings. The under plumage is not white, but ashy, with a faint hue of brown. The bill is ebony black, but the tarsus and toes blue-black.

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\* See page 291. (B.)